

Coming Out of Exile

AFFIRM UNITED / S'AFFIRMER ENSEMBLE

August 3-6, 2012

At Beaconsfield United Church (an Affirming Ministry in the United Church of Canada)
202 Woodside Rd.
Beaconsfield (Montréal), Quebec H9W 2P1

2012 Conference and Annual General Meeting

We invite members, guests, and friends to a celebration that includes speakers, workshops, worship, community time, and warm Québec-style hospitality. The 2012 Annual General Meeting will take place the morning of Monday, August 6, at Beaconsfield United Church.

Conference Theme

Coming Out of Exile recalls the experiences of LGBTQ Christians and allies as "strangers in a strange land," exiled from our family and friends, our faith, and even from ourselves. Despite its pain, exile has been a time rich with creativity and spirituality. In exile, we have learned resilience. As we come out of exile, God calls us to new places. We ally ourselves with brothers and sisters everywhere who still live in exile. We challenge exclusion and injustice. We continue to engage in courageous conversations with one another across differences.

Theme Presenters

Donald L. Boisvert, PhD, is an associate professor of Religion at Concordia University in Montreal, where he also teaches in the sexuality studies program. In addition to a number of scholarly articles, he is the author of two books: *Out on Holy Ground: Meditations on Gay Men's Spirituality and Sanctity and Male Desire: A Gay Reading of Saints*. He recently co-edited a two-volume collection entitled *Queer Religion*. Dr. Boisvert is a former co-chair of the Gay Men and Religion Group of the American Academy of Religion and he is currently a candidate for ordination in the Anglican Church of Canada.



Rev. Dr. Ofelia Ortega is one of the eight presidents of the World Council of Churches. The first woman to be ordained by the Presbyterian Church in Cuba, she was the rector of the Evangelical Theological Seminary in Matanzas for eight years, leading it to a multi-faceted ministry of social service and community involvement. The founder of the Christian Institute on Gender Studies and a Member of the Cuban Parliament, Dr. Ortega has presented at

numerous gatherings and government commissions on inclusion and justice for LGBTQ persons. Most recently she was a theme speaker at a 500-delegate gathering in Havana organized by the Cuban National Center for Sex Education. She spoke of "Breaking the Silence" and the Gospel challenge of truth telling.

Special events at this year's conference:

- Gatherings for Queer Youth throughout the conference
- Sunday brunch and worship at L'Église Unie St-Jean
- Update on LGBTQ issues coming to the United Church General Council meeting in Ottawa, August 2012
- Free time to explore Montréal or attend DIVERS/CITÉ

Workshop possibilities

- Creating a LGBT Youth program
- Affirm United en français
- How to become an Affirming Ministry
- Networking with Affirming Ministries
- LGBTQ issues internationally

Registration fee: \$175, includes coffee breaks and snacks, supper on Friday, lunch and supper on Saturday, and lunches on Sunday and Monday.

A limited number of subsidies are available to help cover registration fees or travel costs.
Apply by email to conference@affirmunited.ca

For registration information go to www.affirmunited.ca

For more information email: conference@affirmunited.ca